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September 1968

North Vietnamese Efforts to Take Over Neutral Laos

On 5 June 1968, U.S. Ambassador Averill Harriman, addressing North Vietnam's delegation to the Paris peace talks, accused Hanoi of waging "not one but several wars" in Asia. When Ambassador Harriman went on to urge Hanoi to live up to its early agreements to neutralize Laos as a step to end the fighting in Vietnam, he helped bring to world attention a situation long known to observers of Asian affairs: Hanoi's continuing efforts to take over Laos as well as South Vietnam and the vital role the small neutral country of Laos plays in the long range stability of Southeast Asia.

This aggrandizement began in the 1950's when Ho Chi Minh's troops first entered Laos to bolster the efforts of the local Lao Communists (the Pathet Lao) to overthrow the Royal Lao Government (RLG). The Pathet Lao have been so closely supported by Hanoi in this effort that their movement has become a facade behind which the North Vietnamese are operating militarily and politically. North Vietnamese supplies keep the Pathet Lao armed, clothed and fed; North Vietnamese troops (known as the Peoples' Army of Vietnam -- PAVN) keep the Pathet Lao's waning military forces supplied with fresh fighting men. Military experts estimate, in fact, that the North Vietnamese have deployed 57 PAVN battalions to Laos totalling anywhere from 30,000 to 45,000 troops.

The number of North Vietnamese troops in Laos has been steadily growing since 1962. It was that year that the Geneva Accords were signed by Burma, Cambodia, Canada, France, India, Poland, Communist China, North Vietnam, Laos, South Vietnam, the USSR, the UK, and the United States. The Accords provided that all foreign military personnel and equipment would be withdrawn from Laos by October 1962. Although Western military advisors and technicians operating with the RLG withdrew prior to the deadline, North Vietnam withdrew only a handful of its several thousand troops: the official checkpoint established by the Geneva Accord signatories recorded less than 50 NVN troops leaving.

Since that day NVN troops have grown steadily from the original few thousand to the 30,000 to 45,000 now in Laos. The reason for the large discrepancy between the lowest and highest estimates lies in the varied nature of the duties performed by NVN personnel in Laos. First, there are the previously mentioned 57 battalions of PAVN troops involved in military actions, such as the recent assaults on Lao provincial capitals; in addition, several thousand PAVN troops serve with Pathet Lao troop units; there are also North Vietnamese truck crews -- both military and civilian -- transporting military supplies from North Vietnam into South Vietnam and Cambodia; there are untold numbers of NVN coolie bearers packing supplies over Lao jungle trails to PAVN units and Viet Cong fighting in South Vietnam; and there are many NVN construction workers impressed into repair and maintenance

work on Lao roads, trails and waterways. And the largest group of all includes the PAVN troops using these Lao roads and trails (known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail) to infiltrate from North Vietnam into South Vietnam. The number of such infiltration can easily range as high as 12,000 in one month.

There is little question that thousands of North Vietnamese are serving in Laos in a military capacity against the Conference-supported Government of Laos, killing the citizens of that neutral country and supporting local insurgents who could not survive without Hanoi's support and guidance. Proof of Hanoi's regular and increasing violations of Lao territorial integrity and destruction of Lao property and lives lies in numerous pieces of convincing evidence including:

a. A vast amount of photographic evidence of NVN activities along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, such as pictures of truck convoys, PAVN troops, cargo boats headed for South Vietnam, and maintenance crews at work;

b. Testimony (supplied by the RLG) of Lao civilian eyewitnesses, of the Pathet Lao ralliers and of Royal Lao military personnel who have fought the invading PAVN;

c. Testimony on the movement of specific PAVN units through Laos given by PAVN personnel who have either been captured in Laos or in South Vietnam, or who have surrendered or rallied to the Government of South Vietnam;

d. Mute evidence supplied by captured Viet Cong documents, military equipment captured in Laos, equipment found in NVN encampments overrun in Laos and items such as diaries, photographs, etc. taken from PAVN prisoners;

e. The statements of various Southeast Asian leaders concerned over incursions into neutral territory and over the abrogation of the Geneva Accords and the spread of violence and bloodshed in Asia;

f. Official protests made to the UN General Assembly by the RLG each year since 1963 regarding Hanoi's violations of Lao borders, PAVN attacks on Lao military and civilian installations and NVN assistance to the Pathet Lao.

There are other pieces of evidence, most recent of which is a White Paper issued by the RLG in July 1968 protesting NVN interference in Laos and containing extensive documentation regarding that presence. This is the third White Paper on this subject issued by the RLG (the others appeared in 1964 and 1966).

The evidence clearly reveals Hanoi's strategy and expansionist aims. Some analysts of Asian affairs, in fact, believe peace in Laos is even more vital to the long range stability of Southeast Asia than peace in Vietnam. They base their conclusion partially on Laos' location, squarely in the heart of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula where it can serve as a protective barrier or be used, as it is now being used against South Vietnam, as an infiltration route into any country in the region. The truth of the matter probably centers more directly on the fact that the fates of Laos and South Vietnam -- as well as the other neutral or free nations of Southeast Asia -- are inextricably tied together, and a peace treaty to end the war in South Vietnam which provides meaningful safeguards against any takeover of South Vietnam by North Vietnam, will also help to safeguard the other small nations of Southeast Asia.

XAT LAO, Laos
20 June 1968

Two NVN Defectors Interviewed by Xat Lao Reporter

According to our report published in the Xat Lao yesterday, Private Trinh Van Giao and Corporal Cao Van Thanh of the North Vietnamese Regulars gave themselves up while they were on their way to South Vietnam. Private Trinh Van Giao defected because of unbearable hardship and fear of being killed. He said he missed his parents and his brothers now living in Nakhon Phanom, Thailand.

Corporal Cao Van Thanh who decided to defect together with Private Trinh Van Giao, besides the reasons of hardship and fear of being killed, reportedly surrendered because of being afraid of punishment to be imposed on him for driving carelessly. He said he left North Vietnam on March 13, 1968, driving a truck with a trailer carrying a big gun. He had to travel during the night and rest during the daytime for making necessary repairs. During the night, he was allowed to use only low lights for the journey. The conditions of the road were terrible and dangerous as he had to pass through valleys and mountainous areas and on the 29th day of his journey, the truck went off the road and turned upside down causing damage to the big gun. No one was killed. Thanh said the accident happened because he was tired and sleepy.

He told the story of his life through an interpreter. He was formerly with an anticraft battalion and was later transferred to an artillery serving as a driver together with Private Trinh Van Giao. He is now 21 years old. He was born in Tho Son in the Province of Thanh Hao in Central North Vietnam. He was married to Le Thi Hoa, 19. One month after his marriage, he was ordered to leave North Vietnam to liberate South Vietnam. He disclosed another reason for his rallying to the National Army together with his friend -- he wished to see whether progress in free countries was different from that in North Vietnam.

When asked what would happen to his parents and his family if his defection was known by North Vietnamese authorities, he said he had no choice. He knew that his relatives would suffer punishment imposed on them by the government; for example, when they were sick they would receive no medicine and no help would be rendered by the government. The most serious thing was that they would be called the parents, wife, or relatives of a traitor.

About the problem of marriage, he said that boys under 23 and girls under 20 are not allowed to get married. Boys and girls get married secretly and notify the authorities later if they are under the allowed age.

XAO Approved For Release 2005/08/17 : CIA-RDP78-03061A000400030025-9
20 June 1968

ເຮັດຮູ້ວ່າເພາະເຫງົາມອນປ້ານກຸກໂບດ ເລີຍຕັກສິນໃຈໂຕນເຂົ້າມາສວາມພັກດໍຣັຖບາລ

ຕາມຂ່າວທີ່ເຮົາໄດ້ສູນິຕໍ່
ທ່ານຜູ້ອ່ານໄປແລ້ວ ເພື່ອ ວາມ
ນັກຮຽນກັບທະຫານພົນ ອົບ ປະ
ຈຳກາຣຂອງວຽກຕາມ ເໝືອ
ສອງຄົນຄືພົນທາຣ ຕອນວັນ
ເຍີ ແລະສົບໂທ ເກົາວັນທັນ
ໄດ້ໂຕນທນິໃນຂນະ ເດີມ ທາງ
ຜ່ານລາວລົງ ໄປສູ່ ວຽກຕາມ
ໃຕ້ນັ້ນ ພົນ ທາຣ ຕອນ ວັນ
ເຍີ ທນິ ເພາະ ທນິ ມ ຄວາມ
ທຸກຍາກ ແລະທົນຕໍ່ຄວາມຢ້ານ
ຕາຍບໍ່ໄດ້ແລະໂດຍສເພາະຄິດ
ເຖິງພໍ່ແມ່ແລະນ້ອງຊຶ່ງຢູ່ນຄອນ
ພນິນປະເທສໄທ (ຕາມຂ່າວສະ
ເນີໄປແລ້ວ) ສ່ວນ ສ ທ ເກົາວັນ
ທັນນີ້ ເຂົາໄດ້ຕັກສິນໃຈທນິນາ
ກັບພົນທາຣຕອນວັນເຍີນອກ

ຈາກເບື້ອງໜ້າຄວາມທຸກຍາກ
ອິດຢາກຫຼັງຢູ່ໃນວຽກຕາມເໝືອ
ບ້ານເກີດຂອງເຂົາ ແລະອອກ
ຮົບເພື່ອຜະເຊີນກັບຄວາມຕາຍ
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ເຫງົາມອນເວ ລາ ຂັບ ອົງ ບັນ
ທຸກປີນໃຫຍ່ ແລະພາໃຫ້ອົງ
ເຈົ້າກອນກອນທາງເສຍຫາຍ
ຊຶ່ງສົບໂທເກົາວັນທັນໄດ້ ບອກ
ກັບຄົນຂ່າວ ເອງ ໃນ ກາຣ ສຳ
ພາສວ່າ ຂະນ້ອຍຂັບອົງບັນ
Chut. Kaph. Kaph.
□ ອ່ານຕຕນາທລງ

ເຮັດຮູ້

ທຸກທາຣ ແລະນິຣົງ ພ່ວງ
ປີນໃຫຍ່ອອ ຈາກ ວຽກຕາມ
ເໝືອ 13 ມີນາ 1968
ຈົນເຖິງ ວັນ ທີ 14 ເມສາ
1968 'ຮວມແລ້ວ ເປັນເວລາ
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ຕ້ອງໃຊ້ໄຟມ້ອຍ ໄປຕາມຮ່ອມ ເຈັບປ່ວຍມາຮັບໄດ້ຢ້າ ເວ

ປານໃດ ?

ຕໍ່ຄຳຖາມຂອງຜູ້ສື່ຂ່າວວ່າ ຖ້າ
ທາງທາງກາຣຮູ້ວ່າຕົວເຂົາໂດດ
ຫນີແລ້ວພໍ່ແມ່ ແລະເມື່ອ
ຢູ່ທາງບ້ານຈະບໍ່ໄດ້ຮັບໂທດບໍ່?
ສ. ທ ເກົາວັນທັນ ບອກ ວ່າ
" ຈຳເປັນ ເພາະໄດ້ມາແລ້ວ
ຕາມທັນະດາກໍມີໂທດ ແຕ່ບໍ່
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ໂທດໂດຍທາງອ້ອມເຊັ່ນ ເວລາ
ເຈັບປ່ວຍມາຮັບໄດ້ຢ້າ ເວ

2

[illegible]

August 1968

Chronology of North Vietnamese
Violations of 1962 Geneva Accords on Laos

(Troop strength estimates based on
photography, prisoner interrogation,
captured documents, eyewitness reports,
etc.)

In the 1962 Geneva Accords (the US was NOT a signatory to the 1954 accords) it was agreed that all foreign military personnel and equipment not specifically needed for defense or requested by the Lao Government should be withdrawn from Laos.

Western military advisors and technicians completed their orderly withdrawal from Laos in advance of the conference-established deadline. Hanoi's performance, however, took a different tack:

1. less than 50 of several thousand North Vietnamese left Laos through the official checkpoint;
2. some North Vietnamese fighting units were reportedly dispersed to different locations in Laos and not back to Vietnam;
3. supported by Communist China and North Vietnam, the Pathet Lao broke the cease-fire agreement in March 1963 and attacked government defense forces in the Plaine des Jarres in north central Laos;
4. captured North Vietnamese soldiers have admitted entering Laos between February and September 1964 in units varying in size from 50-650 men each; the captured soldiers also admitted carrying Communist-made weapons and ammunition and of attacking Lao Government defense forces;
5. an estimated 6-7,000 North Vietnamese soldiers were stationed in Pathet Lao-controlled areas by early 1965;
6. In 1965 the International Control Commission (set up under the 1962 Accords and composed of a Pole, a Canadian and an Indian representative) documented charges that Hanoi had violated the Geneva Accords by sending military personnel and equipment into Laos to join with their Pathet Lao comrades in attacks against the nation's legally constituted government;
7. at least 10,000 North Vietnamese regulars were estimated to be in Laos in mid-1965;

(Cont.)

8. a cave, located northeast of the Plaine des Jarres, was captured by Laotian Government Forces on 24 October 1965. The cave contained 10 tons of ammunition, a number of Soviet-made machine guns, a radio made in Communist China and 50 North Vietnamese army uniforms.
9. by the end of 1965, the Lao Government had within its own boundaries captured 29 North Vietnamese troops, killing upwards of 180 and capturing nine North Vietnamese regulars;
10. ICC report No. 35, released by the United Kingdom on 6 December 1965, revealed clear evidence of North Vietnamese violations of the 1962 Geneva Agreements by introducing foreign troops into Laos;
11. in commenting on the ICC report (investigating the North Vietnamese presence in Laos) released by the United Kingdom on 22 August 1966, the British Foreign Office stated: "The report provides convincing evidence of operations of North Vietnamese troops in Laos contrary to the 1962 Geneva Agreement";
12. in September 1966 the Lao Government issued a 230-page White Paper on North Vietnamese violations of the Geneva Accords; the document contained hard evidence of North Vietnamese infringements of Lao territory including interrogations of PAVN troops captured in Laos;
13. on 18 October 1966 Lao Premier Souvanna Phouma addressed the United Nations and informed the world at large about the White Paper on North Vietnamese aggression against Laos;
14. in late November 1966, it was estimated that as the monsoon season drew to a close North Vietnamese troop infiltration through Laos into South Vietnam had risen to 7,000 for the previous month;
15. by the end of 1967, North Vietnamese combat and support personnel in Laos are believed to have totalled 35,000;
16. NVA troops threatened Lao provincial capitals of Saravane and Attapeu, and Lao Pham; in early to mid-1968;
17. in May 1968 the Lao Government released the names and curriculum vitae on each of 45 North Vietnamese prisoners and 16 North Vietnamese defectors as well as a detailed "order of battle" in PAVN units stationed in Laos;
18. in July 1968 the third White Paper on North Vietnamese Violations of the Geneva Accords was issued; it numbers 111 pages;
19. by mid-Summer 1968, it was estimated that between 40,000 and 45,000 North Vietnamese troops were stationed in Laos.

Excerpted remarks of Asian leaders re North Vietnamese violations of territory of Laos

Remarks of King Sri Savang Vatthana re Nature of War in Laos, made in Pakse on 7 May 1968: (excerpts)

"All we Lao people realize full well that the kingdom of Laos has been independent since 1953. Now there is a war in Vietnam. This is the affair of the citizens of our neighboring country, Vietnam, and the people of Laos should not stick their noses in and become involved with them. But the 'necessity' to 'liberate' our country has brought only war to Laos. We Lao do not think of 'liberating' our country, we think of caring for our country and carrying out our duty to protect our blood and tradition from disappearing. This war is not a war to liberate our country. We do not need to liberate our country. We need to protect our country.... Our territory has been well defined by agreements which many countries have signed.... Our independence and integrity have been clearly specified in these agreements.... The war brings many foreigners into Laos. They do not come to liberate Laos. They come to oppress Lao people, to live at the expense of the Lao people, and to seize our land and our food. We people of Laos never want to seize one piece of land from our neighboring countries...."

Remarks of Japanese Ambassador to Laos, Yoshito Shimoda, on North Vietnamese Intervention in Laos, made in Tokyo during Yomiuri Roundtable on Vietnam last week in May (reported in 28 May Yomiuri Shimbun, Japanese language newspaper of over 4 million circulation): (excerpts)

"The biggest problem for Laos at present is withdrawal of the North Vietnamese forces ... this is because North Vietnam has not observed the 1962 Geneva Agreement at all in spite of its promise to respect the neutrality of Laos and not to send armed forces into that country. The Laotian Government says that there is evidence of a violation of the Agreement. The Laotian problem has its basic cause in North Vietnam's violation of the agreement."

"Apart from a case in which Hanoi will cease to attempt intervening in Laos or conquering it, the Laotian situation will not calm down, in cases other than that, even if the Vietnam problem is settled proper organization should be formed under which the 1962 Agreement can be observed with certainty."

Speech of Lao Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma to Lao National Assembly on 30 May 1968 on general state of Lao affairs: (excerpts)

"Our problems, ... are the product of war. For years we have been suffering from external aggression. The Hanoi Government, betraying international public opinion and repudiating its signature, has violated every agreement that it has signed, in order to interfere in our internal affairs and support a rebellion which was insignificant at the outset and even today would not amount to much if North Vietnam did not support it militarily. Politically speaking, the (Pathet Lao) is not a national movement. It owes its survival solely to the battalions of the Hanoi Government."

"This situation has now brought us nearly 600,000 refugees, who fled the Communist areas, leaving everything behind them to escape (the Pathet Lao)"

dictatorship. It has also caused our country to become a busy transit route for North Vietnamese troops on their way to South Vietnam ... this did not prevent North Vietnam from stating recently ... that our assertions are false and deceitful. It denies the evidence. It chooses to ignore the prisoners, the deserters, the dead soldiers in uniform, the reports of the International Control Commission, the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and the statements of thousands of refugees. It denies everything at once in order to conceal it's aggression and preserve Communist truth....

"Members of the Assembly, these are the conditions under which the Government has been working for years ... our whole national problem consists, in the first place, in resisting foreign aggression by every means....

"The Hanoi Government pretends to consider the Lao question as one that is totally unrelated to the events in Vietnam, whereas it is part of the same problem, since there are North Vietnamese troops in Laos supporting the (Pathet Lao)."

**VIOLATIONS
OF THE GENEVA ACCORDS OF 1962
BY THE GOVERNMENT OF
NORTH VIETNAM**

**1968
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF LAOS**

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WASHINGTON POST
21 April 1968

50 Communists Killed In 'Fierce' Laos Fight

VIENTIANE, Aug. 19 (UPI)—Royal Laotian troops killed at least 50 Communist Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese guerrillas in two days of "very fierce" fighting in south central Laos last week, a Laotian Defense Ministry spokesman said today.

The spokesman said the fighting took place Friday and Saturday south of Muong Phalane after government troops recaptured the strategic highway town for the second time this year.

A total of 23 government troops were killed and 40 wounded when an estimated battalion of North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao attacked the

government troops in a night position after dark Friday, he said.

Fighting raged through the night and all the next day with the Laotian forces calling in artillery support and air strikes by T-23 fighters.

The Communists broke off contact late Saturday, leaving the bodies of 50 comrades but taking other dead into the jungles with them, the spokesman said.

It was the heaviest fighting since the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao overran government outposts in the offensive last February which coincided with the heavy fighting in South Vietnam.

WASHINGTON POST
31 May 1968

Laos Premier Accuses N. Viets of Aggression

From News Dispatches

VIENTIANE, Laos, May 30—Premier Souvanna Phouma today accused North Vietnam of aggression against Laos and displayed 84 captives and defectors and the wreckage of a North Vietnamese plane as proof.

Speaking to the sixth congress of the Laotian National Assembly, Souvanna said, "The government of Hanoi pretends to consider the Lao question as one unrelated to the events in Vietnam, despite the fact that it is all the part of the same problem."

Souvanna said his country faces "grave dangers" from North Vietnam. "For years we have suffered foreign aggression." North Vietnam "denies everything outright," he added, "to camouflage its aggression and to safeguard the Communist truth."

Souvanna's speech was the first time he has formally charged North Vietnam with aggression. He has made similar statements in private conversations and at unofficial function.

Souvanna, increasingly outspoken since March about Communist activity, said more than 40,000 North Vietnamese

nently in Laos and have "turned our country into an active transit route for North Vietnamese troops going to South Vietnam."

A spokesman of the Ministry of National Defense said Communist forces in Laos include 57 North Vietnamese army combat battalions, 4000 other soldiers as advisers and cadres to Pathet Lao units, and another 11,900 North Vietnamese assigned to guard duty along the Ho Chi Minh supply trail from North to South Vietnam.

Souvanna later escorted newsmen to the Phone Keng military camp just north of Vientiane to see 45 North Vietnamese soldiers his men had captured.

The display also included 19 defectors from North Vietnamese forces and more than 200 pieces of captured military equipment ranging from rifles to a Russian-made armored personnel carrier and the plane wreckage. In a new development, Laotian military leaders said government

forces had recaptured the village of Muong Phalane, 220 miles southeast of the capital, after a four-month occupation

Giap Strategy Seen in Laos

By Jack Folsie
Los Angeles Times

VIENTIANE—What is the motivation for increased Communist activity in Laos? How closely is it related to the adjacent war in Vietnam?

Most Western observers and Lao leaders believe the sharper fighting by the Communist Pathet Lao and their North Vietnamese allies is now part of the Vietnam war and related to Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap's overall strategy.

Giap is Hanoi's Defense Minister and an old hand at coordinating action in Vietnam and Laos.

One of his moves in Laos just after the year began was to eliminate the only Royal Lao government strong point which could have affected the Khesanh battle. His North Vietnamese (NVA) regulars, using tanks for the first time in Laos, overran the Royal Lao battalion at Banhouel-sane, on Route 9, about six miles west of Khesanh.

It was the first indication that the North Vietnamese were upgrading the Lao war from its usual seasonal intrusion into government rice-growing areas to resupply their own Laos-based troops who are garrisoned mostly in mountainous terrain where food is scarce.

An increase in North Vietnamese soldiers in the fighting also was noted. U.S. military attaches, who are numerous and range widely throughout Laos in their aircraft, have estimated that there are 5000 more NVA combat soldiers in Laos this year. This raises North Vietnamese strength to an estimated 40,000, of which 15,000 are used in conjunction with the generally less effective Pathet Lao troops. The Pathet Lao have an estimated strength of 29,000 men.

The remaining North Vietnamese are in units protecting the Ho Chi Minh infiltration trails and routes running southward through eastern

Laos, or are laborers improving the trails and roads so that resupply of NVA and Vietcong troops in Vietnam can increase—despite interdiction by aircraft from Vietnam and American fighter bombers based in Thailand.

Laos Premier Souvanna Phouma, speaking at an Armed Forces Day ceremony here recently, noted that "since this year began, external aggression and internal insurgency directed against our country has taken a very serious turn."

He said the enemy "for the first time uses new modern weapons." He referred to the Soviet-made 140 mm. rockets which had been used in southern fighting around embattled Lao Ngam and against the government's surrounded garrison at Attopeu.

The Premier attributed the enemy's more aggressive action in southern Laos to an effort to widen the area it holds.

The emphasis appears to be on holding Lao villages which can become rest stations for coolie back-packers and truck convoys.

One other theory on the increased enemy action in Laos relates to the possibility that Hanoi plans to negotiate an end to the war in both Vietnam and Laos. The theory combines the Laos action with the Tet offensive against Vietnam cities so as to put Hanoi in a position to talk tough at the peace table.

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 THE OREGON TIMES
 23 July 1968

Laos' Neutrality Policy

Withdrawal of Red Forces Demanded

LONDON (FWF) — Prince Souvanna Phouma, the neutralist Premier of Laos, paid a private visit to Paris at the end of June and had discussions with American officials about the U.S.-North Vietnamese talks. The Prince published a long statement to the press calling for the withdrawal of 40,000 North Vietnamese troops from Laos as the price for a halt in the American bombing of North Vietnam.

Talking of the "forgotten war" in Laos, the Prince recalled the terms of the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos which provided for the creation of a coalition Government of the rightists, leftists and neutralists under a neutral Premier. (Prince Souvanna Phouma has held this post since 1962) and the evacuation of foreign military forces.

After the 1962 agreement was signed the Americans withdrew 800 "advisers" from Laos, and the withdrawal was verified by the International Control Commission (ICC) provided for under the agreement. North Vietnam failed to evacuate some thousands of North Vietnamese forces.

Hanoi's Denial

Moreover, North Vietnam has consistently denied that it has forces in the country, and North Vietnamese propaganda refers to "the struggle against U.S. imperialists conducted by the Laotian people under the leadership of the NLHX." (The Neo Lao Hak Xat or Laotian Patriotic Front is the political arm of the Communist Pathet Lao, and is controlled from North Vietnam.)

In 1963, the Pathet Lao (led by the Premier's half brother, Prince Souphanouvong) withdrew from the Laotian coalition Government after Prince Souvanna Phouma charged the Communists with destroying neutrality; the four Communist Government seats have remained vacant ever since.

The Pathet Lao took up positions in the northeast of

the country where an estimated 15,000 North Vietnamese fight alongside about 28,000 Pathet Lao soldiers in a guerrilla war against Laotian Government forces. In the south-east of Laos the North Vietnamese, with 7,000 troops and some 18,000 supporting civilians, run the "Ho Chi Minh Trail" of supplies from North to South Vietnam. About two-thirds of Laos and about 75 per cent of the people are said to be under Government control.

Early in 1968 North Vietnam launched a major dry-season offensive in Laos, the largest for two years. They pushed Government troops back from positions gained during the previous year, carried out widespread rice raids and came near to the royal capital of Luang Prabang.

It is now estimated that North Vietnamese forces in Laos amount to 40,000, and Prince Souvanna Phouma said in his Paris statement that it is the presence of these troops that "has obliged the Laotian Government to maintain an army of 100,000, which is an enormous quantity for a country which has barely three million inhabitants."

Prince Souvanna Phouma has consistently opposed foreign intervention in Laos, while denouncing North Vietnam's invasion. His Government is supported by Russia (as a co-chairman of the Geneva Conference) and his position depends on continued neutrality. He will not allow American, South Vietnamese or Thai troops to enter Laos to block the Ho Chi Minh Trail, but he actively encourages American bombing of North Vietnamese on the trail.

U.S. Military Aid

The United States provides Laos with substantial military and other aid; there are 1,750 American officials in Laos (including 880 dependants) apart from contract employees of American air lines distributing rice in mountain areas.

The American AID program has extended the area of rice cultivation, and U.S. officials are confident they can turn Laos from a rice importer to an exporter within a few years, given a measure of security and stability in the country.

During his visit to Paris, Prince Souvanna Phouma called for an expanded and effective International Control Commission to enforce the neutrality of Laos. He suggested that the present Indian-Polish-Canadian membership should be expanded to five nations with authority to operate by majority vote instead of the present method which gives each member a veto and leads to deadlock.

Another factor that paralyzes the ICC is that no investigation can be made according to the 1962 Geneva Agreement without the consent of all three factions in the Lao Government. As the Pathet Lao remains, on paper, one of the three factions and will not authorize investigations against North Vietnam, the ICC is powerless.

Hanoi's Accusation

The Hanoi Government maintains that its policy is "to scrupulously implement the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos." The North Vietnam News Agency consistently attacks the present Laotian Administration.

These attacks on the Laotian Government as "henchmen," "flunkies" "puppets" of the Americans were accompanied by more direct allegations of U.S. military presence in Laos. On the other hand, the Hanoi Government does not appear to wish to have Laotian neutrality too strictly scrutinized, and has supported the "correct stand" of the secretary general of the NLHX in "protesting against the U.S. bringing up the Laotian problem at the current Paris talks because this encroaches upon Laos' independence and sovereignty, and runs counter to international law."

CPYRGH
TTHE JAPAN TIMES
30 June 1968

Between Hanoi and Vientiane

For the past several years world attention has been riveted upon the protracted war in South Vietnam so much so that the steadily increasing pressure Hanoi and Peking are applying against their other neighbors has largely escaped international notice. But it now seems evident that the current events in these countries—particularly in Laos—are closely related to those in South Vietnam.

In the last three months, the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao forces launched a series of mop-up operations against pro-Government guerrillas in their rear areas. A score of Meo guerrilla bases were captured by the Communists, and the Government forces suffered a severe setback in these areas.

The Communist commandos also attempted to stage a miniature Tet offensive against Vientiane and blow up the Lao military headquarters and other important governmental facilities. The abortive offensive, it is said, was similar to the one carried out by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong terrorists against Saigon and other South Vietnamese cities during the Tet holiday this spring.

Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma, in a state-of-the-nation speech to the National Assembly on May 30, accused North Vietnam of aggression against Laos. He directly related North Vietnam's activity in his country to the peace talks now under way in Paris, saying Laos faced "grave dangers."

In fact, there is an unmistakable synchronization between the events in Laos and those in Vietnam. The war in Southeast Asia, beyond all doubt, constitutes one indivisible whole.

Thus, it is the belief of Prince Souvanna Phouma that the war in Laos will be brought to an end at the same time as the war in South Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh's interest in Laos undoubtedly is pragmatic as well as doctrinal. The major consideration is Hanoi's need to ensure continued control of the Laotian provinces contiguous to the border of Vietnam and Cambodia—areas which have been under Communist domination ever since 1954.

Hanoi also plans, presumably, to use Laos as a political pawn in the present peace talks, by taking as much territory as possible in Laos to strengthen its bargaining power at the peace talks table.

Even more evident are the existence and the role of the so-called Ho Chi Minh trails—infiltration routes that run from North Vietnam into South Vietnam through the territory of Laos.

Insurgent Vietnamese forces, which also include Laotian "nationalist" or Pathet Lao elements, originally wrested the eastern provinces of Laos from French and Royal Laotian control during the climactic months of the Indochinese War. Under terms of the 1954 Geneva ceasefire agreement, however, Ho Chi Minh's forces were to withdraw to what is now North Vietnam. Pathet Lao troops who were unwilling to reintegrate into the Laotian community were to regroup into two northern Laotian provinces—Phong Saly and Sam Neua.

Neither Communist element made more than token gestures toward honoring those commitments, however. Their presence in and out of the border provinces continues to threaten Laos' national survival.

After three years of negotiations, the Royal Laotian Government and the Pathet Lao concluded an agreement in 1957, under which the Government was to reoccupy the two northern provinces and absorb 1,500 Pathet Lao troops into the Royal Army. The remainder of the Pathet Lao forces were to be disbanded.

The Pathet Lao, however, refused to abide by the agreement. In the meantime, increased Government border patrolling activity in early 1959 stimulated a campaign of violent denunciation in Hanoi, followed by thrusts into Laotian territory by North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao forces. By late August that year, the Communist forces were threatening Luang Prabang, the royal capital, and Vientiane, the administrative capital.

On July 23, 1962, the 14-nation Geneva Conference adjourned with the signing of a declaration pledging respect for the neutrality and independence of Laos and a joint protocol spelling out procedures for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Laos within 75 days.

Formation of a coalition Government, with Prince Souvanna Phouma reinstalled as Premier, and rightist Gen. Phoumi Nosavan and leftist Prince Souphanouvong installed as deputy premiers, preceded conclusion of the Geneva Conference by about one month. But, fighting between Government forces and combined Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese forces continued, particularly in the historic Plain of Jars and around the Na Key Plateau in central Laos.

We must devoutly hope, together with the Laotian Prince Premier, that the violators of the 1962 Geneva Accords will agree to "silence the guns and allow the Laotian people to settle their own affairs in peace and full sovereignty."

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REDS HEAT UP LAOS— REAL KEY TO ASIA?

While battles in Vietnam make headlines, it's the struggle in Laos that could determine the future of Southeast Asia. Today, Laos is an infiltration corridor for the Communist drive to seize South Vietnam. Tomorrow it could be the route for other conquests.

VIENTIANE, Laos

Clues to the long, frustrating and uncertain road that lies ahead in Vietnam can be found in neighboring Laos—a country that twice has been the subject of peace talks with North Vietnam's Communists, but still is at war.

Until June 5, the war in Laos had been a forgotten struggle in a sleepy country. On that day, U. S. Ambassador W. Averell Harriman, addressing North Vietnam's delegates to the Paris peace talks, accused the Communists of waging "not one war, but several wars" in Laos. He urged Hanoi to live up to its early agreements to neutralize Laos as a step to end the fighting in Vietnam.

Laos clearly is a key to what happens in Vietnam and Paris in coming months. Some of the shrewdest analysts of Asian affairs, in fact, are convinced that peace in Laos is even more important to the long-range stability of Southeast Asia than peace in Vietnam.

There is a real possibility, these experts say, that the war—and even a peace of sorts—could be won in South Vietnam but lost in Laos, and ultimately in all Southeast Asia. This, they say, is true for closely linked reasons of geography, strategy and big-power politics.

A crossroads country. Geographically, Laos is the keystone country of the entire Indo-Chinese Peninsula. It borders on every nation of the region—Burma, China, North Vietnam, Cambodia, South Vietnam and Thailand. Laos can be either a protecting barrier, or an infiltration route to any of these countries.

Strategically, Laos made the war in South Vietnam possible. North Vietnam never could have infiltrated enough men and matériel across the 37-mile-long Demilitarized Zone separating North and South Vietnam to sustain the struggle in the South.

It has been Hanoi's control of mountainous Eastern Laos—the Ho Chi Minh Trail area—that made possible its major drive in South Vietnam. With little effort, this same supply system could be turned toward Cambodia or Thailand.

Politically, tiny Laos is the country where Asian goals of the world's big powers cross and often clash. It is a place where U. S. diplomats can, and often do, meet with and tell their Russian counterparts to "cool down" North Vietnam. It is a place where North Vietnam's appetite for aggression can be measured by how close its troops move toward the Mekong River.

Finally, it is a country where an effort to insulate Asia's small nations from Communist subversion by international agreement has had little success.

Another 20-year war. War is no newcomer to Laos. Just as in South Vietnam, there has been fighting here off and on for more than 20 years. But in recent months, the pattern of this fighting seems to be changing.

Since Laos became nominally neutral under a peace settlement in 1962, North Vietnamese-backed Communist forces every year have pushed into non-Communist areas of Laos during the December-to-April dry season. The Communists have collected rice, propagandized peasants and generally shown their contempt for the Government in Vientiane. Then, when monsoon rains started falling in May, the Communists would pull back or offer little opposition to advancing Government troops.

This year, the "forgotten war" cycle looks different to veteran observers. Fighting has been two or three times as widespread as in the 1967 dry season, and much more intensive than in any past year. Sharp fighting is continuing even into the rainy season.

In Southern Laos, one of the most strategically important regions in Indo-China, Red offensive probes along the Se Done River went right on in May despite heavy rains. North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao—the local Communist force—lost at least 175 men killed in two weeks, but still did not pull back as they have on similar occasions in the past.

Besides winning more territory, the Laos Government seemed anxious to develop Laotian Government development proj-

ects north of the town of Pakse. This, too, is a change from the past, when such projects were seldom touched.

Communist troops have even continued to move into a few villages, a very rare move in past rainy seasons. Big towns such as Saravane, Attapeu and Lao Ngam, all in Southern Laos, are still threatened by North Vietnamese battalions that have been in the area since early this year. Capture of any of these towns would mark a major change in the war, say diplomats in Vientiane.

A weathervane? A tip-off as to which way fighting in Vietnam and talking in Paris may turn could come from what the Communists do next in Laos.

Are they digging in to stay in the eastern part of the country, building a sanctuary through the heart of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula? Are they holding on to Laotian ground so that they can bargain when Laos comes up in the Vietnam peace talks? Or are they simply slower than usual in pulling back this year?

Much will depend on how Hanoi assesses its position in Vietnam and its prospects for wringing concessions from the U. S. in Paris. Many observers think North Vietnamese President Ho Chi Minh is preparing, particularly in Laos, to follow whatever alternatives look most promising for achieving his old dream of dominating all Indo-China.

That is why the "forgotten war" is such an obstacle to real peace.

Laos itself is made up of three kingdoms tacked together arbitrarily by its French colonial rulers. The country is about the size of Britain. Its 91,000 square miles include rich Mekong Valley rice fields, hardwood forests, sheer mountains rising to 9,000 feet and dense, tangled jungles. No accurate census ever has been taken, but the population is thought to be about 2.5 million.

1954—and after. Though the war that drove France from Southeast Asia was fought mainly in Vietnam, it occasionally spilled over into Laos. The 1954 peace settlement ending that war gave Laos its complete independence, along with a partitioned Vietnam. Ever since, Hanoi's campaign to win Vietnam has closely linked Laos and Vietnam in recurrent, abortive peace talks.

Remote Laos might seem to be the world's least likely spot for a big-power crisis. But it has happened before, and easily could happen again.

In 1961, the Communists were threatening to overrun all of Laos. The U. S. hastily began advising and equipping the Laotian Army. Russia started airlifting supplies to the Communist side.

A conference in Geneva attempt-

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ed to end the crisis by making Laos "neutral." This meant that, internally, power would be shared by neutralist, non-Communist and Communist blocs in a Government headed by Premier Souvanna Phouma. Externally, Laos would shun military ties and take economic help from anybody willing to offer it.

Futile formulas. The 1962 conference did manage to shift the main struggle in Indo-China from Laos to Vietnam. But that was about all. The attempt to maintain peace through formulas similar to some now being proposed for Vietnam quickly collapsed.

Laos became, in effect, another partitioned Asian country. North Vietnam, backed by Red China, withdrew only a handful of its 10,000 or more troops. The U. S., breaking the spirit if not the letter of the Geneva agreement, began a steadily increasing and barely concealed military-aid program.

Now, the Indo-China war has returned to Laos full time.

The Pathet Lao is not much of a military threat and never has attracted much popular support. But, backed by 45,000 North Vietnamese troops, the Communists are more

than a match for the 70,000-man Laotian Army.

The Communists have a considerable edge in firepower. Even Pathet Lao units carry Chinese-supplied AK-47 assault rifles, far superior to the U. S. carbines and M2 rifles of the Laotian Army. The Laotian military's biggest advantage is air power. Old, propeller-driven T-28 planes, with bombs slung under their wings, often operate from Laotian airfields. But these aircraft are effective in the kind of war fought in Laos.

A clear field. Communist forces now dominate nearly half of Laos—about the same as before the 1962 cease-fire. But they are in a much-improved position. Most of mountainous Southeastern Laos, the region running southward from the Demilitarized Zone in Vietnam, has been swept clean of Government forces. It is in this region that a sanctuary would be most useful to the Reds.

"The North Vietnamese could put 15 divisions in there," says a European military attaché. "It's 2,500 square miles, and the Government doesn't have a thing in there except an occasional patrol or sabotage squad. Militarily, there is no reason why they can't dig in there to stay if they want to."

The Ho Chi Minh Trail area of Laos is being bombed heavily by U. S. planes based in Thailand. One of the many things that must be ironed out in Paris is whether the "complete" bombing halt demanded by Hanoi as the price of serious negotiations would apply to attacks on North Vietnamese units in Laos.

If the Paris talks should collapse, and fighting continues, the thin fiction of Laotian neutrality also almost certainly would collapse. Both North Vietnam and the U. S. will step up their activity in Laos if the peace bid fails, observers say.

This point is stressed: No matter what happens in Paris, Ho Chi Minh is not likely to abandon his dream of controlling all Laos. Since 1930 his aim has been to unite all the onetime French colonies under Communism. This goal also includes at least part of Thailand.

Cambodia and Thailand. Even if there is some kind of truce in Vietnam, a continued North Vietnamese build-up in Laos could simply mean the Indo-China war was being swung into Cambodia or Thailand. So far, Cambodia has not been a major target of Communist subversion. However, North Vietnam increasingly has used Cambodian trails, rivers and sanctuaries to supply the regroup forces operating in South Vietnam.

Cambodia's mercurial ruler, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, is well aware of all this, but could do relatively little about it even if he wanted to, according to diplomats who know the region well. An effort to close the infiltration routes could bring the country under the kind of Red pressure being applied in Laos.

Thailand is different. The country's backward northeastern Provinces, just across the often-unguarded Laotian border, already have a potentially serious problem of insurgency. Thailand still is far from becoming "another Vietnam," but the threat is daily increasing.

Infiltration across Laos into Thailand now is a slow but steady process, according to intelligence sources. Infiltrators are said to be mostly Thai, not Vietnamese as Thailand often claims.

The basic pattern seems to be to recruit potential guerrillas in Thailand, send them to North Vietnam for training and indoctrination, then infiltrate them back across the Mekong River. In Thailand, they either join active insurgent bands or slip back into rural society to await a signal to step up insurgency.

North Vietnam's actions in Laos over the coming months could be far more revealing than the talks in Paris. A thinning out of North Vietnamese forces in

Laos as well as in South Vietnam would raise real prospects of peace. But any indication that Hanoi's control over Eastern Laos is being used to build permanent bases and sanctuaries would mean was the "crucial theater" in deciding Indo-China's future.

In 1968, despite all the costly struggles in Vietnam in the years in between, there is a real likelihood that just the reverse may be true: Laos, not Vietnam, may hold the key to Southeast Asia.

that the Paris talks are simply an interlude in a continuing war.

In 1962, when the U. S. and North Vietnam last negotiated face to face, the late President John F. Kennedy observed that even an imperfect peace was acceptable in Laos because South Vietnam

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September 1968

"The Anti-NATO Campaign" Since Karlovy Vary

The keynote speech to initiate the current anti-NATO campaign was given by Soviet Communist Party Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev, addressing the Conference of Communist and Workers Parties of Europe at Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia, in April 1967. Although his call to action was pitched to European communist parties, West European socialist and social democratic parties, it was also meant to reverberate throughout the Near East, if not the whole world. In his first long speech devoted entirely to foreign affairs, Brezhnev removed the "European security" proposal from the sphere of disarmament and disengagement and decreed its use as a program for global communist party agitation and propaganda against NATO: (excerpts only)

"Comrades ... Europe is not merely a regional problem and is not an isolated internal affair of the European peoples alone ... To thwart the aggressive plans (of the forces of imperialism) in Europe ... is to deal it a defeat which would have effects everywhere.... This would also be a real help to the liberation struggle of the peoples on all other continents.

"... We are convinced that a Europe can and must be created in which security for each state and each people would at the same time be security for all....

"... The central question of European security is the inviolability of the frontiers of the European countries (as established) after World War II.... A very important prerequisite for security ... is recognition ... of the GDR (East Germany)....

"In two years the governments of the NATO countries will have to decide whether NATO is to be extended or not. In our opinion ... communists and all progressive forces should try to use this circumstance to develop still widely the struggle against the preservation of this aggressive bloc.

"There is no justification whatever for the constant presence of the U.S. fleet in waters washing the shores of southern Europe.... The time has come to demand the complete withdrawal of the U.S. Sixth Fleet from the Mediterranean."

The aim of disrupting the NATO alliance is also emphasized in the final statement issued at the close of the Karlovy Vary Conference:

"The 20-year period of the validity of the Atlantic pact expires in 1969, and this makes possible a clear alternative: a Europe with military blocs. This alternative must be put on the agenda with all earnestness.

"No effort should be spared in order to develop a broad movement of the peace-loving forces of our continent against the extension or any modification of the Atlantic pact."

The Fallacy of 1969

As stated in a prize-winning essay, published April 1968 in the United States Naval Institute Proceedings, "... the NATO nations must take concerted, positive action to kill off the alliance, not positive action to maintain it.... There is considerable discussion these days over the possibility that on its 20th anniversary in 1969 the Treaty will expire unless the member states vote to renew it.... The North Atlantic Treaty is of unspecified duration. If, acting individually or collectively, the member states do nothing in 1969, the Treaty and its organization will continue in force.... The true significance of 24 August 1969 lies in Article 13...."

"European Security Conference": Euphemism for "Out of NATO"

Supporters of "European Security" and the anti-NATO agitators represent interests ranging from the far right to the radical left and include pacifists as well as advocates of a strong defense. They are unable to agree on a security alternative to NATO membership; some promote unilateral disarmament, some an armed neutrality, some a more regionalized (i.e., Nordic or Mediterranean) military alliance, and some the Soviet "positive neutrality" concept. There is unanimity on only one point: "Get out of NATO!" It is only on this blatant propaganda attack against NATO and on the instigators of the propaganda that we concentrate here -- not on seeking alternatives.

The far right should be noted only in passing, because its views are so identical with those of the Kremlin. The German "neo-Nazi" view, developed under the leadership of NPD ("National Democratic Party of Germany") Chairman Adolf VonThadden, is given in the NPD official program adopted at its November 1967 convention:

"... the units of the Bundeswehr (West German Armed Forces) should be trained and equipped solely for national defense. Therefore, treaties and agreements on whose basis the employment of German soldiers outside this scope would be possible, should be terminated.

"... Instead of military integration in NATO, the units of the Bundeswehr must be reorganized and re-equipped, for the needs of a European defense organization."

The left is represented by Moscow-oriented Communist and "progressive" parties and by Soviet-dominated Communist-front groups. By usurping organizations spawned from Europe's "anti-U.S.-because-of-Vietnam"

movements and by exploiting Europe's desire for detente, both parties and front groups have attracted to their campaign large segments of the non-aligned center. The destroy NATO movement has become enmeshed with activities geared to promoting a European Security Conference for spring of 1969.

Front group, progressive left, and communist party meetings, demonstrations, and seminars have been the vanguard. At a semi-parliamentary level, one European security preparatory conference (12 May 1968) has been held to date.

Appeal to the elite has come from Moscow itself. High-level delegations visiting Moscow, especially those from NATO-member countries, are reminded of the Soviet insistence that their best interests lie with the USSR, outside of NATO*. (This summer, Pravda's suave, glib foreign affairs editor, Yuriy Zhukov, (who is also Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee) visited The Hague and Brussels and Premier Kosygin made an "idyllic visit" to Stockholm; the visits of both were used to publicize the Soviet view of a secure Europe, free of NATO.

Vanguard activity is best highlighted by public statements and resolutions adopted during meetings held since Brezhnev's April 1967 speech. Viewed chronologically they vividly pinpoint the instigators and show up the blatancy of the propaganda. Communist Parties in member countries, while assiduously clinging to the theme (to which the Warsaw Pact is committed) that both NATO and the Warsaw Pact should be dissolved, stress that their own countries could ease tensions by withdrawing from NATO. The most active front groups have been the World Council on Peace (WCP), the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), the International Union of Students (IUS), and their many affiliates. As seen from the chronology, the WCP, especially, has moved from a vanguard role to one of behind-the-scenes instigator.

Kosygin Appeals to Scandinavia

No outstanding bilateral issues needed discussion when Soviet Premier Kosygin visited Sweden, 11-13 July 1968. The probable motive is found in two extraneous events: (a) the visit followed Norway's Parliamentary decision of 14 June 1968 favoring continued alliance with NATO by a vote of 150-6; (b) the first joint Warsaw Pact naval maneuvers, incorporating Soviet amphibious forces, to be held in northern waters opened the day

*i.e.: 16-20 October 1967, Norwegian Defense Minister Tideman; 22-24 May 1968, British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart; 17-25 June 1968, Belgian Chief of Staff General Georges Vivario; 8-12 July 1968, Turkish Foreign Minister Caglayangil.

Kosygin arrived. Kosygin used a 13 July press conference, on the eve of his departure, to reiterate Soviet views on Scandinavian neutrality, European security, recognition of the GDR, and the "suggestion" that Norway and Denmark should leave NATO and thus to publicize these views for broad Scandinavian consumption.

Effect of the "Czech Crisis"

The massive Warsaw Pact maneuvers of 20-30 June held on Czechoslovak soil, the political-pressure-threat against Czechoslovakia as Soviet forces continued their largest maneuver in Pact history at the Czech border through mid-August, and finally the Warsaw Pact (less Rumania) military occupation of Czechoslovakia on 21 August -- all have muted the destroy NATO call from the "progressive forces." Preoccupation with other matters is exemplified by the resolutions from the 28 July-6 August Sofia Youth Festival which condemns NATO more obliquely in terms of anti-imperialism.

Meanwhile, Soviet media have continued the anti-NATO tirade: The Warsaw Pact's Sever naval maneuvers were held 11-19 July. For the first time including Soviet naval amphibious units, the maneuvers took place in the North Atlantic, Baltic, Barents, North and Norwegian seas under command of Soviet Admiral Gorshkov. Responding to Norway's uneasiness at having Soviet amphibious units running well in sight of the Norwegian coast, Admiral Gorshkov moved the spotlight to focus on NATO's Polar Express exercise, held a month earlier, in June. On 20 July, in Izvestiya, Admiral Gorshkov characterized Polar Express as "provocative and aggressive" and concluded that the Warsaw Pact exercise "has shown that at sea we have forces capable not only of checking the imperialist aggression but also, if the need arises, of delivering a blow from which they could not recover."

In the Mediterranean, Soviet propaganda concentrated on Cyprus: Pegged to a British announcement that the present squadron of Canberra planes at the British bases will be replaced next year by Vulcan bombers and the 23 July British Admiralty commentary that the Vulcan (like all modern military aircraft, including the Canberra!) has a nuclear as well as conventional capability -- the Soviets announced that "NATO was establishing nuclear weapons depots on Cyprus." Moscow Radio on 24 July described the announcement as an example of "increasing activity in the Eastern Mediterranean by the entire aggressive NATO bloc and the American leaders of that bloc."

On 12 August 1968, Pravda reacted to NATO's announcement that training maneuvers were scheduled for the week of 19 August to be held in northern Greece. An editorial described the exercise as "part of the imperialist policy of military provocations and ideological subversion spearheaded against socialist countries."

F

September 1968

WARSAW PACT AND NATO: TWO RADICALLY DIFFERENT CONCEPTS

"Within the alliance we fulfill all our obligations, but we claim also all our rights. This is the difference between allies and satellites."

(George Papandreou, speaking as Prime Minister of Greece, 1963)

WARSAW PACT

Founded August 1955 (almost overnight, in answer to Germany's entry into NATO) to hasten military integration of the USSR with East Europe and justify keeping Soviet troops in those countries.

Political Consultative Committee (with Soviet Secretary General) supposed to meet at least twice yearly for "consultation among member states." Has met only nine times in past 19 years to agree on predetermined policy.

All military elements are Soviet-commanded: the Supreme Commander, the Chief-of-Staff, Chief of Air Defense, and all major Warsaw Pact maneuvers are held under Soviet command.

Military intervention as a political pressure tactic to guarantee Soviet hegemony:

Hungary - 1956

Czechoslovakia - 1968

Standardization of armament throughout Pact membership: dependent on Moscow for qualitative-quantitative arms supply. (The more loyal the member, the better the equipment -- e.g., only the USSR and GDR have advanced air defense missile systems.)

-- no equivalent --

(Nuclear sector is the exclusive competence of the USSR)

-- no equivalent --

(Only the Soviet finger controls the nuclear trigger)

NATO

Carefully worked out in 1949, culminating several years' work for viable European peace -- thwarted by Soviet intransigence, hostility, etc.

North Atlantic Council (with Italian Secretary General) meets at minimum five to six times annually, as representative NATO forum.

Chiefs of NATO military command elements are representative of a number of member nations; NATO exercise command alternates.

-- no equivalent --

-- no equivalent --

Nuclear Planning Group (4 permanent & 3 alternating members) guarantees national participation in nuclear planning.

"Two keys" system gives members veto over use of nuclear weapons on their national territories.

September 1968

The Anti-NATO Campaign: Chronology of Events,
September 1967 to September 1968

Mid-September 1967 - The World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) met in Warsaw to formulate their strategy for an anti-NATO campaign. On 22 September the WFDY President was quoted as saying: "Next year will be, for the progressive youth organizations in capitalist countries, a year of intensified struggle for the liquidation of the aggressive Atlantic Treaty..." National anti-NATO youth groups were to be organized, after which would be held, sometime in summer or fall 1968, a WFDY-sponsored "Conference of the Youth of the Warsaw Pact and NATO." (Later scheduled to be convened in Helsinki.)

9-10 October 1967 - The World Council of Peace (WCP) met in East Berlin. "What Effect Will the Expiration of NATO in 1969 Have on European Security?" was discussed by the secretariats of 22 European Peace Committees. (The answers remained unpublicized.)

27-29 October 1967 - The Presidential Committee of the WCP met in Leningrad. Representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the International Institute for Peace (IIP) also attended. The WCP Secretary General reported that the "greatest single achievement was the building of what is now commonly called 'the Stockholm spirit' as a result of holding the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam.... The future Conference on European Security, should be approached and organized in the same 'Stockholm spirit' in cooperation with all others who have similar aims." The committee resolved to hold a European Security Conference in fall 1968 and called for a joint seminar to be held by the International Confederation for Disarmament and Peace (ICDP) and the WCP "after the Easter marches" on the theme "NATO must quit Europe." In November 1967 the IIP circulated a letter iterating the point that "on the question of European security ... the main task is to organize a conference with all the European political and social forces, especially of peace All European peace forces should unite to hasten the dissolution of NATO."

Early - December 1967 - Invitations had been issued to a conference of peace delegations from member countries of NATO to be held in Brussels December 1967, sponsored by the Union Belge pour la Defense de la Paix "To coordinate activities of all peace groups ... in an attempt to prevent renewal of the NATO Pact in 1969 ..." It was no coincidence that on 13 December 1967, the NATO Council of Foreign Ministers met in Brussels. The January 1968 WCP Information Bulletin announced that the "Brussels peace movement, at the suggestion of the WCP, had invited national and international organizations of NATO countries to meet in Brussels in order to inform ... NATO ... of their wish to obtain the rapid simultaneous dissolution of military pacts in Europe." (Representatives of peace, anti-atomic, and disarmament groups from France, Britain, Luxembourg turned up with the Portuguese Anti-Fascist Movement, the WFTU, and the WCP.)

Late 1967 - An editorial in the WCP's November - December 1967 issue of Perspectives states in part: "April 1969 marks the end of the 20-year term for which the NATO was established In the German Federal Republic there are plans for compensating The idea is to make up for the disintegration or dissolution of NATO by substituting a Bonn-Washington axis It is clear that the new situation that would arise with the abolition of military blocs and the establishment of collective security throughout Europe could hinder any such attempt"

1 January 1968 - The Danish Land og Folk carried a New Year's message from the President of the Danish Communist Party in which he said: "Our main task is the struggle for a policy aimed at neutrality and disarmament. Our people have long denounced all that NATO stands for"

January - February 1968 - The Italian Communist Party (PCI) distributed petitions addressed to the Italian Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, calling generally for Italy's exit from NATO coupled with an appeal for a system of "European security," and specifying the removal of NATO bases from Italy. In March - April 1968, the PCI Central Press and Propaganda Section put on sale a pamphlet appealingly entitled "NATO -- THE ENEMY IN THE HOUSE."

February 1968 - The WCP noted in a Perspectives editorial that "the peace forces are aware that action against the prolongation of NATO is unfortunately lagging behind" ... and that the WCP was "ready to cooperate in action to ensure increased activity by the forces of peace to bring about the withdrawal of NATO governments from the alliance."

4 February 1968 - An ambitious propaganda initiative was signalled by Novosti's commentator, Spartak Beglov: "I think 1968 will be a year of active public discussion of the question of whether or not there is to be a NATO in 1969."

March 1968 - The International Union of Students (IUS) met in East Berlin to map their campaign "against fascism and dictatorial regimes in Europe" and to mobilize student campaigns "against the NATO military bloc." (Resolutions were not publicized.)

9 March 1968 - The Berliner Extradienst announced the formation in West Berlin of an international action center to fight NATO. The decision was described as resulting from a resolution adopted at the February Vietnam Congress, to "destroy NATO."

14-19 May 1968 - In Istanbul, Turkey, the period was declared "NO TO NATO WEEK." The movement was sponsored by the leftist leaders of the Istanbul Technical University Student Union, supported by 16 other organizations.

28 April 1968 - The Danish organization of Social Democratic Youth (SDY) met in Odense to set up their policy platform. By a minority vote (46 - 29 with 58 abstentions) the meeting resolved "to call upon Denmark to withdraw from NATO in 1969." At a preconference SDY Executive Committee

a series of compromise conditions for Denmark's continued NATO membership: a European security conference before 1969; recognition of the Oder-Neisse border and of the GDR, and the exclusion of "fascist countries" from NATO. Apparently this resolution was not radical enough.

12 May 1968 - The first "European Security Preparatory Conference" opened in Brussels, chaired by Minister Henri Rolin, under a cloak of semi-respectability. In attendance were individuals of some importance from nine European countries: three NATO representatives (France, Italy, the U.K.), three Warsaw Pact countries (the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Poland), and three neutrals (Austria, Sweden, and Switzerland). Also present were the Secretary of the WCP, Yves Choliere (France); ranking WCP official, Aleksandr Korneychuk (sole representative of the USSR!); and the secretary of the Belgian WCP (Union Belge pour la Defense de la Paix), Rose Holender. (Resolutions have not been publicized.)

26 May 1968 - The Youth Battalion of the Communist Party of Iceland organized an "anti-STANAVFORLANT" demonstration in Reykjavik ((STANAVFORLANT: Standing Naval Force Atlantic, January 1968)) Thjobviljinn of 29 May carried an interview with the head of the group, Ragnar Stefansson, who said that the "objective of the demonstration was to publicize American imperialism and NATO's role in this and to spur the Icelandic public to think about Iceland's NATO membership."

6-8 June 1968 - The European Security Commission of the WCP Presidential Committee met in Cyprus. A resolution was adopted which blamed unrest in the Mediterranean region on NATO bases and the presence of the U.S. 6th Fleet and called for action to bring about the dissolution of NATO, the withdrawal from the Mediterranean of foreign troops and the U.S. 6th Fleet (along with an end to "fascism" in Portugal, dictatorship in Greece and Spain, and "Zionist racism" in Israel). With the allegation that a recent NATO agreement would allow "other NATO partners" to participate in the NATO Nuclear Committee, declared July 5th as a "Day of Struggle" for denuclearization and demilitarization of the Mediterranean. The meeting agreed to the following relevant support action: (a) produce a study on military pacts and bases in Europe and consider holding a meeting on this topic before NATO "expires" in 1969; and (b) make the 50th Anniversary of the ending of World War I the peg for activities for European Security.

21 June 1968 - Addressing the East German Council of State, Walter Ulbricht said ... "a European security conference ... is long overdue We believe that European security should not be delayed ... and European states should maintain normal diplomatic relations with the GDR."

28 July - 6 August 1968 - The World Youth Festival was held in Sofia, Bulgaria. NATO condemnation came obliquely in terms of "anti-imperialism."

5 August 1968 - The final communique issued from the five-Bloc-country meeting in Bratislava, concerning Czechoslovakia, included a reiteration of the "need" to hold a European security conference.